

Message Text

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TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

USINT BAGHDAD BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO BY POUCH

XMT AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 017350

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE FROM USUN NEW YORK JAN 19:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 0139

DEPT. PLEASE PASS TO ALL ARA DIPLOMATIC POSTS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, XL, XM

SUBJECT: THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STATES AT THE
31ST UNGA

REF: A) 76 USUN 690 B) 76 STATE 303618 C) 76 USUN 6313

D) 76 USUN 6391 E) 76 USUN 6359 F) 76 USUN 6322 G) USUN 0081

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN
(LATIN) ISSUES WERE AWAY FROM CENTER-STAGE AT THE 31ST
UNGA, AND WHILE THE LATINS WERE NOT KEY ACTORS, THEY PRO-
VIDED US SOME IMPORTANT SUPPORT. FURTHERMORE, IN CONTRAST
TO OTHER REGIONAL GROUPS, THE LATINS TENDED TO ABSTAIN
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ON POLITICAL ISSUES SENSITIVE TO US. DIVISIONS WITHIN
THE LATIN GROUP BETWEEN THE HISPANICS AND THE CARIBBEAN
COMMONWEALTH MEMBERS CONTINUED TO BE EVIDENT. LATIN
ISSUES INCLUDED THE PANAMA CANAL, HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILE,
BELIZE, AND THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. PUERTO RICO WAS NOT
RAISED FORMALLY BUT CUBA, IN ITS STATEMENTS, ATTEMPTED
TO AGITATE MATTERS. OUR REPLIES TO THE CUBANS WERE
WELL RECEIVED. LATIN PERFORMANCE AT 31ST UNGA REFLECTED BOTH
THE FORCE OF TRADITIONAL HEMISPHERIC RELATIONSHIPS AND
WESTERN TIES, AS WELL AS ATTRACTIONS OF CLOSER IDENTIFICATION

WITH THIRD WORLD. COMPETITION FOR LATIN VOTE WILL REMAIN KEEN. IN THAT CONNECTION, OUR WILLINGNESS TO SEEK PROGRESS ON CANAL ISSUE SHOULD HAVE SIGNIFICANT EFFECT WITH LATINS. END SUMMARY.

2. SUPPORT FOR US POSITIONS: WITH WITHDRAWAL OF THE KOREAN RESOLUTIONS, NO REPETITION OF THE ANTI-ZIONISM RESOLUTION, AND A GENERALLY CONCILIATORY ATMOSPHERE AT THE 31ST UNGA, LATIN SUPPORT FOR US POLITICAL POSITIONS WAS LESS EVIDENT THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS. NEVERTHELESS LATIN SUPPORT WAS SIGNIFICANT ON A RANGE OF POLITICAL ISSUES AS WELL AS SOME ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS. LATIN COSPONSORSHIP OF THE PRO-SOUTH KOREAN DRAFT RESOLUTION (10 OF 20 COSPONSORS, WITH SOME HALF-DOZEN ADDITIONAL POSITIVE VOTES ANTICIPATED) WAS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF VOTING STRENGTH WHICH ENCOURAGED WITHDRAWAL OF THE PRO-NORTH KOREAN DRAFT WHICH HAD CUBA AS ITS ONLY LATIN COSPONSOR. ADDITIONALLY, LATINS REPRESENTED ALMOST ONE-THIRD OF THOSE VOTING WITH US AGAINST THE GUAM RESOLUTION. LATIN SUPPORT FOR WESTERN POSITIONS ALSO HELPED ACHIEVE SATISFACTORY COMPROMISES ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES, INTER ALIA: THE LIBYAN AMENDMENT TO THE GERMAN HOSTAGES RESOLUTION, A UKRAINIAN DRAFT RESOLUTION CRITICAL OF US PERFORMANCE AS HOST COUNTRY, OPEC EFFORTS TO OPPOSE ADOPTION OF A NEW SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS MORE CLOSELY TO OPEC MEMBERS, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND RESOLUTIONS ON HABITAT, AND THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY. AMONG THOSE WHO SOMETIMES VOTED WITH US, NICARAGUA WAS THE MOST RELIABLE, FOLLOWED BY HAITI AND URUGUAY AND THEN CHILE, COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA AND GRENADA.

3. ABSTENTIONS AND ABSENCES: A STRIKING FEATURE OF LATIN VOTING ON ISSUES OF INTEREST TO US WAS THE LARGE PERCENTAGE OF ABSTENTIONS -- PARTICULARLY IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER REGIONAL GROUPS. MOST OF THE LATINS SEE ABSTENTION AS A MEANS OF INDICATING NON-SUPPORT FOR A RESOLUTION. IF VOTES WITH US AND ABSTENTIONS ARE CONSIDERED TOGETHER, OVER HALF OF THE LATINS FREQUENTLY FELL INTO THESE TWO CATEGORIES ON ISSUES OF INTEREST TO US. FREQUENT ABSTAINERS ON SUCH ISSUES WERE THE BAHAMAS, AND EL SALVADOR, FOLLOWED BY COSTA RICA, THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, GUATEMALA, PARAGUAY, URUGUAY AND SURINAM. ABSENCES TOO COULD BE SIGNIFICANT IN THIS REGARD. HONDURAS HAD A LONG LEAD IN THIS RESPECT WITH GUATEMALA AND HAITI DISTANT SECONDS. ON THE UNGA VIETNAM MEMBERSHIP RESOLUTION WHICH CRITICIZED OUR VETO IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL, CHILE, GRENADA, GUATEMALA, HAITI, HONDURAS, PARAGUAY AND URUGUAY ALL WERE ABSENT. THE VOTE AS A WHOLE WAS: 124-1(US)-3.

4. OPPOSITION: OVERALL, HOWEVER, THE LATIN RECORD ON CONTENTIOUS ISSUES WHERE THERE WAS A FIRM NONALIGNED OR G-77 POSITION, WAS NOT ENCOURAGING. ON NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES, THE LATIN VOTING RECORD WAS ONE OF UNIFORM OPPOSITION. THOSE LATIN AMERICANS WHO WERE IN ALMOST UNIFORM OPPOSITION TO US POSITIONS, INCLUDING VOTES OF PARTICULAR SENSITIVITY TO US, INCLUDED: CUBA, JAMAICA, GUYANA, PANAMA, AND -- IN CONTRAST TO A SLIGHTLY LESS NEGATIVE RECORD LAST YEAR -- TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. AMONG THOSE SINGLING US OUT FOR GRATUITOUS CRITICISM (REFS B AND C) WERE CUBA, GUYANA, PANAMA AND PERU. CONFIDENTIAL

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5. MAJOR UNGA POLITICAL ISSUES:

(A) SOUTHERN AFRICA: WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A FEW VOTES ON INDIVIDUAL PARAGRAPHS CONDEMNING NATO OR THE US AND OTHERS AND A FEW ABSTENTIONS ON THE RESOLUTIONS CONTAINING SUCH PARAGRAPHS, THE LATIN RECORD ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN QUESTIONS WAS ONE OF ALMOST UNIFORM SUPPORT FOR NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE AND OPPOSITION TO APARTHEID AND SOUTH AFRICA. AN EXCEPTION WAS THE LATIN VOTE ON THE ISRAELI/SOUTH AFRICAN COLLABORATION RESOLUTION. WHICH MANY LATIN AMERICANS SAW AS A GRATUITOUS AND UNFAIR ATTACK ON ISRAEL.

(B) MIDDLE EAST (ME) ISSUES:

LATIN SUPPORT FOR PRO-ARAB POSITIONS ON THE ME REMAINED HIGH WITH, HOWEVER, SOME SLIGHT INCREASE IN ABSTENTIONS ON SOME ISSUES. ON HIGHLY CONTROVERSIAL AND DIVISIVE ME RESOLUTIONS, E.G., ISRAELI/SOUTH AFRICAN COLLABORATION, THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE, AND THE OMNIBUS RESOLUTION ON THE ME SITUATION, HALF OR MORE OF THE LATIN AMERICANS SOMETIMES ABSTAINED AND A FEW LATIN AMERICANS CAST NEGATIVE VOTES. COSTA RICA WAS BY FAR THE MOST FREQUENT LATIN OPPONENT OF PRO-ARAB RESOLUTIONS, SOMETIMES OPPOSING RESOLUTIONS IN ISOLATION WITH ISRAEL. NICARAGUA FOLLOWED WITH HAITI AND GUATEMALA NEXT. BOTH BRAZIL AND MEXICO AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES ABSTAINED ON THE ISRAELI/SOUTH AFRICA COLLABORATION AND THE OMNIBUS RES ON THE SITUATION IN THE ME.

6. LATIN DIVISION: DIVISION IN THE LA GROUP OVER LATIN ISSUES WAS EVIDENT ON THE BELIZE RESOLUTION AND THE RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILE. ADDITIONALLY, THERE WAS SOMETIMES DIVISION ON ISSUES WHERE THE US WAS DIRECTLY INTERESTED. DIVISION WAS BASICALLY BETWEEN THE CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES AND THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMONWEALTH MEMBERS PLUS CUBA ON THE ONE HAND AND SOME OF THE HISPANICS ON THE OTHER. ON THE BELIZE VOTE, FOR INSTANCE, OF THE LATINS, ONLY PANAMA, SURINAM AND THE CARIBBEAN COMMONWEALTH STATES PLUS CUBA SUPPORTED THE PRO-BELIZE RESOLUTION, WHILE THE SOLE OPPOSITION TO THE RESOLUTION WAS FROM EIGHT HISPANICS. THE TWELVE NEGATIVE VOTES ON THE RESOLUTION ENTITLED "PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILE" CAME FROM ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, CHILE, COSTA RICA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, NICARAGUA, PANAMA, PARAGUAY AND URUGUAY. THE COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEANS PLUS CUBA WERE JOINED BY COLOMBIA, MEXICO, AND VENEZUELA IN CONDEMNING CHILE. THEN, ON THE FALKLANDS, THE COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEANS (LESS GRENADA WHICH WAS ABSENT) WERE THE ONLY LATINS NOT TO SUPPORT THE PRO-ARGENTINE RESOLUTION. ON OTHER, NON-LATIN, ISSUES THE LINES OF DIVISION WERE LESS CLEAR. ENMOD (REF D) WAS AN ISSUE WHICH SERIOUSLY DIVIDED THE LATINS.

7. LATIN LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION: IN THE ABSENCE OF MAJOR FOCUS ON LATIN ISSUES, AND BECAUSE OF THE SPECTRUM OF LATIN VIEWS ON POLITICAL ISSUES, NO SINGLE LEADER EMERGED. DIFFERENT INDIVIDUALS PLAYED IMPORTANT ROLES ON DISPARATE ISSUES: MEXICO'S MARIN ON DISARMAMENT, FOR EXAMPLE, AND URUGUAY'S VIGOROUS AND ARTICULATE AMBASSADOR GIAMBRUNO ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILE; (1) AMBASSADOR ILLUECA OF PANAMA WAS INFLUENTIAL DURING HIS NOVEMBER TERM AS SC PRESIDENT, BUT OUTSIDE THE CONTEXT OF THE LA GROUP. LA GROUP CHAIRMEN MANAGED SELECTION OF LA GROUP CANDIDATES IN A USUALLY SYSTEMATIC AND RESPONSIBLE FASHION, BUT DID NOT EXERCISE LEADERSHIP ON OTHER KINDS OF QUESTIONS. AMBASSADOR ORTIZ DE ROZAS OF ARGENTINA, IN THE WINGS AS A POSSIBLE COMPROMISE CANDIDATE FOR UN SECRETARY GENERAL, SHOULD THE CANDIDATES OF WALDHEIM AND MEXICO'S EX-PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA BOTH HAVE FAILED, WAS AN ACTIVE AND RESPECTED DELEGATE BUT HE DID NOT

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SEEK A LEADERSHIP ROLE AMONG THE LATIN AMERICAN GROUP. (1) COUNSELLOR THOMAS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO WAS BIGOROUS AND ABLE IN COMMITTEE V (ADMINISTRATION AND BUDGET) WHICH WAS ATYPICAL OF LATIN INVOLVEMENT IN THAT COMMITTEE;

8. LATIN AMERICAN ISSUES:

(A) THE PANAMA CANAL: PANAMA CONTINUED EFFORTS TO DEMONSTRATE WIDESPREAD INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR ITS POSITION AND KEEP OUT NOSE TO THE NEGOTIATING GRINDSTONE. THE PANAMANIAN DELEGATION TOOK ADVANTAGE OF A NUMBER OF OPPORTUNITIES OF VARYING APPROPRIATENESS TO REITERATE STRONGLY -- AND SOMETIMES OFFENSIVELY -- PANAMANIAN VIEWS. FOR EXAMPLE, A FACET OF PANAMANIAN

PRESSURE WAS AN EFFORT TO INCLUDE A RELATIVELY CONTENTI-
OUR PARAGRAPH ON THE CANAL NEGOTIATINS IN THE RESOLUTION
ON THE AMPHICTYONIC CONGRESS. HOWEVER, OPPOSITION BY
BOLIVIA AND OTHER LATINS TO POLITICIZATION OF THE
RESOLUTION RESULTED IN A MORE OBJECTIVE AND SHORTER
REFERENCE TO THE NEGOTIATIONS. FURTHERMORE, THE
PANAMANIANIANS ACCEPTED OUR SUGGESTION TO INCLUDE AN
ADDITIONAL PHRASE WHICH GAVE THE PARAGRAPH SOMEWHAT
MORE BALANCE. BASED ON GENERAL DEBATE STATEMENTS AND
OUR OWN CONVERSATIONS, PANAMA APPEARED TO ENJOY SUPPORT
ON THE CANAL, NOT ONLY AMONG LATINS BUT AMONG THE UN
MEMBERSHIP AS A WHOLE.

(B) HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILE: THE PARTIALLY-SUCCESSFUL
COUNTER-ATTACK LAUNCHED BY GIAMBRUNO OF URUGUAY (REF E)
AND SUPPORTED BY A SIZABLE NUMBER OF HISPANICS IS
WORTH REEMPHASIZING. LATIN SUPPORT FOR THE URUGUAYAN
POSITION THAT THE COMMUNIST WERE DEMONSTRATING A GROSS
DOUBLE-STANDARD IN SIGHTING IN SO EAGERLY ON CHILE
CAME LARGELY FROM LATINS THEMSELVES CONCERNED ABOUT
CRITISM OF THEIR OWN RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

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(C) BELIZE: ALTHOUGH DEBATE ON THE QUESTION OF
BELIZE WAS SOMEWHAT BRIEFER AND LESS ACRIMONIOUS THAN
LAST YEAR WITH A FEW SHIFTS IN THE VOTE THE
RESOLUTION, THE NET EFFECT WSS MUCH THE SAME--
ANOTHER IMPRESSIVE EXPRESSION OF INTERNATIONAL
SUPPORT FOR THE BELIZEAN POSITION.

(D) FALKLANDS: IN CONTRAST TO THE 30TH GA WHEN
THE FALKLANDS WERE NOT CONSIDERED, THIS GA WAS THE
SCENE OF A REPETITION OF THE SKIRMISH OVER THE
FALKLANDS PREVIOUSLY UNLEASHED IN THE COMMITTEE OF
24. AN INTERESTING ELEMENT WAS ARGENTINE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE ORTIZ DE ROZAS' CONTENTION THAT THE 1975 ICJ
OPINION BUTTRESSED ARGENTINA'S ARGUMENT THAT
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND NOT SELF-DETERMINATION IS
THE GOVERNING PRINCIPLE IN THE CASE OF THE FALKLANDS.

9. PUERTO RICO: PUERTO RICO WAS NOT RAISED FORMALLY
AT THE 31ST UNGA BUT WAS REPEATED TOUCHED UPON BY
CUBA IN VARIOUS STATEMENTS, SOME OF WHICH WE REPLIED
TO. THE GENERAL THRUST OF THE CUBAN LINE WAS TO RE-
CAPITULATE THE COMMITTEE OF 24 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT
ON PUERTO RICO. A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS COMMENTED
FAVORABLY ON OUR "STATESMANLIKE" RIGHTS OF REPLY AND
SAID THAT THE RESULTS OF THE PUERTO RICAN ELECTIONS
REENFORCED OUR POSITION ON PUERTO RICO.

10. INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY ASSESSMENTS:

(A) ARGENTINA: WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE FALKLANDS AND A MODERATE LEVEL OF ACTIVITY ON DISARMAMENT ITEMS AND ON ECONOMIC ISSUES, ARGENTINA PLAYED A SMALL AND CAUTIOUS ROLE AT THIS GA, OUT OF PROPORTION TO ITS TALENTED DELEGATION.

(B) BARBADOS: IN SPITE OF THE ANTICIPATED FOREIGN
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POLICY LINE OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND REPEATED PROTESTATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP BY THE NEW PERM REP, BARBADOS DID NOT VOTE WITH US ON ANY ISSUE OF IMPORTANCE TO THE US AND FREQUENTLY VOTED AGAINST US.

(C) BRAZIL: BRAZIL KEPT A LOW PROFILE DURING THE GA AND WAS ALMOST TOTALLY INACTIVE ON ECONOMIC ISSUES, DEMONSTRATING ITS CONTINUING DISTANCE FROM LDC POSITIONS ON SUCH QUESTIONS. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF IMPORTANT HELP ON ENMOD, BRAZIL ABSTAINED OR VOTED AGAINST US ON ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO US.

(D) CUBA: AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS, THE CUBAN DELEGATIONS WAS EXTRAORDINARILY ACTIVE, USUALLY VERY EFFECTIVE AND UNIFORMLY UNHELPFUL TO US ACROSS A VERY BROAD SPECTRUM OF ISSUES. CUBAN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE ALARCON, WITH TALENT AND EVIDENT RELISH, ATTACKED US IN PLENERY AND IN A VARIETY OF COMMITTEES ON ISSUES INCLUDING: "DESTABILIZATION," THE CUBANA CRASH, THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, PUERTO RICO, A MILITARY EXERCISE IN CENTRAL AMERICAN, SOUTHERN AFRICA, WEATHER MODIFICATION, AND "AGGRESSION" IN MOST CORNERS OF THE GLOBE. THE CUBANS WERE ACTIVE AS A MEMBER OF THE NONALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE.

(E) GUYANA: IN ADDITION TO VOTING THE WRONG WAY ON ALMOST EVERY ISSUE, THE GUYANESE DELEGATION WAS A LEADER AMONG THE NONALIGNED (REF G).

(F) MEXICO: THE MEXICAN ROLE (HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE US AND THE USSR) IN THE DISARMAMENT DEBATE (REFS D AND F) CONSTITUTED MEXICO'S MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITY. IN THE ECONOMIC AREA, MEXICO WAS MUCH LESS ACTIVE THAN LAST YEAR AND FAILED TO ACHIEVE ANY MAJOR SUCCESSES. MEXICO WAS NOT AGGRESSIVE ON THE CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES WHICH WAS BARELY MENTIONED IN
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G-77 RHETORIC. MEXICO'S DELEGATION WAS ACTIVE, HOWEVER, IN PROMOTING PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S

UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDACY FOR THE UN SECRETARY GENERALSHIP.

(G) PERU: PERU'S VOTING RECORD SUGGESTED NO CHANGE IN PERUVIAN FOREIGN POLICY. PERU CONTINUED TO VOTE AGAINST US OR ABSTAIN ON CONTESTED ISSUES.

(H) VENEZUELA: THE GENERALLY UNREMARKABLE PERFORMANCE OF THE VENEZUELAN DELEGATION DURING THE GA WAS PUNCTUATED MAINLY BY PRESIDENT PEREZ' HIGHLY PUBLICIZED PLENARY ADDRESS LATE IN THE SESSION. VENEZUELA DID PLAY A POSITIVE ROLE IN TWO KEY ECONOMIC QUESTIONS -- CIEC AND IFAD. CIEC: CO-CHAIRMAN PEREZ-GUERRERO HELPED ACHIEVE G-77 ACCEPTANCE OF POSTPONEMENT OF THE DECEMBER CIEC MINISTERIAL MEETING. EARLIER, THE VENEZUELAN DELEGATION HAD WORKED (IN VAIN) TO MOVE THE G-77 TO AN ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE ON THE GA RESOLUTION ON CIEC; IFAD: THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT REACHED ITS 1 BILLION DOLLAR TARGET WHEN VENEZUELA JOINED NORWAY (THE ONLY OTHER CONTRIBUTOR) IN TRANSFERRING SUFFICIENT FUNDS FROM THE MORIBUND UN SPECIAL FUND TO IFAD DESPITE OPPOSITION FROM G-77 RADICALS.

11. CONCLUSION: PERFORMANCE OF THE TWENTY-SEVEN-MEMBER LATIN AMERICAN GROUP AT THE 31ST UNGA REFLECTED, ON THE ONE HAND, THE FORCE OF TRADITIONAL HEMISPHERIC RELATIONSHIPS AS WELL AS TIES WITH WESTERN COUNTRIES ELSEWHERE. ON THE OTHER, IT REFLECTED THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ATTRactions OF CLOSER IDENTIFICATION WITH THE THIRD WORLD. OIL CONSIDERATIONS WORKED IN DIFFERENT WAYS ON DIFFERENT ISSUES, DEPENDING ON THE COUNTRY INVOLVED. ADDITIONALLY, THERE WAS SOLIDARITY WHEN AN HISPANIC COUNTRY WAS FACED WITH AN EXTERNAL ISSUE OR PRESSURE. PREDICTABLY, COMPETITION FOR THE LATIN VOTE WILL REMAIN KEEN, IN THIS CONNECTION, CONTINUED WILLINGNESS ON OUR PART TO SEEK PROGRESS ON THE CANAL ISSUE
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SHOULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT WITHIN THE LATIN AMERICAN GROUP. IT SHOULD ALSO BE EMPHASIZED THAT LATIN COLLEAGUES REMAINED MOST APPRECIATIVE OF OUR CONSULTATION. BENNETT
UNQUOTE VANCE

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